

Note:

please keep in mind when reading this draft that i have changed the essential framework of the first chapter, and that this next chapter will be grounded upon the following altered views: previously I used Deleuze and Guattari's notion of desire production to describe the productive nature of desire as based on a logic rejecting the object of lack. After thinking and talking to steve, I have realized and concluded that desire does in fact stem from negation (since compensation inherently implies a lack) and in that process, 'over works' to produce the missing and creates new realities. The rectified version (still in progress) will be centered around the quote by chuck jones : "a fanatic is one who redoubles his effort when has forgotten his aim".

Also, just to acknowledge that this draft is yet again suffering from my chronic illness of schizophrenic thinking in trying to cover way too many issues...anyhow that is why some constructive feedback would be v appreciated :)

lets hope I don't confuse you too much.

**Tentative title (s) : The reproduction of desire / Industrial reproduction of desire...
re-constructed desires, re-constructed realities**

The nature of desire, as understood from my last chapter, is a productive force yearning to cross membranes and in this pursuit produces new realities as a by-product. The logic of the Desire Machine is that negation drives affirmation - in the absence of, the mechanism of desire consequently creates new subjectivities and identities however not necessarily according to desired expectations. From this premise, the ability to harness the forces of desire means to the very possibility to construct and preempt desired realities. Historically anchored by the birth of Public Relations and its instrumentalisation of psychoanalysis in its studies of unconscious desire as a means of social and thereby political and economic control, this following part will trace the industrial reproduction of desire and how that is used to capture (Agre, 1994) and construct our society according to the ruling paradigm of Neoliberalism in the context of networked media. Specifically focusing on social networks as profiling machines, strategies of promise and reward mechanism (elmer, p37) will be reflected. As Greg Elmer's maintains in Profiling Machines (2004), the politics of profiling exists to attempt to account for the unknown - "our ability to adequately capture, contain, or regulate and govern behavior, thought, language and action." (Elmer, 2004, p.134) If profiling machines evidently exist due to the fear of uncapturable, ungovernable behaviors and thought etc., then out of the negation of the "known", it's Desire Machine produces the need for the birth of it's 'Frankensteinian' sibling to sustain itself, namely the *reconstructed* desire machine.

history of the industrial reproduction of desire

At the turn of the last century, a new understanding of the unconscious was theorized by Sigmund Freud as a primitive, sexual and aggressive force rumbling beneath the surface of all human beings. He believed that if these dangerous forces were left uncontrolled, chaos and destruction of society would inevitably follow, thus it was societies rightful duty to repress and control it for the reassurance of a stable civilization. This acknowledgment of the existence of a scientifically certified 'unconscious' provided policy makers and corporations alike the new possibilities to grapple the human condition for the ensuing implementation of a new kind of psychological regime. These fundamental psychoanalytic notions became the bedrock of Western societies strategy of personal, social, political and economic control in the 20th Century.

Adam Curtis's documentary, The Century of Self, reveals that Freud's American nephew, Edward Bernays, was the first to import his uncles studies of the irrational and link it directly with

mass produced goods as a new way of crowd persuasion for corporate American and subsequently politics. Enthralled by propaganda's power to harness people in war times, the profession of public relations was euphemistically transformed into a business model for peace times. Its innovative spin was to uncover the hidden unconscious desires by means of association to commodities in order to seduce people to purchase what they didn't need. This is the budding and menacing beginnings of the enterprise of the reproduction of desire.

beyond natural vs artificial needs (unknown vs artificial)

The logic of the reproduction of desire is built on to Jean- Jacques Rousseau's notion of artificial need. However as Rousseau's discourse on natural vs artificial needs is formulated upon the binary distinction of true/natural and false/artificial needs (Falk, 1994, p. 104), I wish to move away from the moralization against luxury and rather see these oppositions as different states in the transformative and thus reproductive processes of Desire Machines. Historically, different beliefs on the natural or essential human condition vs artificial or civil society have been contested. In contrast to Freud's view that it was societies' role to keep the savage force of the unconscious at bay for the sake of civil order, the radical psychoanalyst, Wilhelm Reich, believed the opposite (Curtis, Century of Self). Similarly, Rousseau claimed that it was the "rise of human civilization with its division of labour and the production of surplus [that] creates endlessly artificial need and an incessant state of desire which necessarily causes pain, dissatisfaction and unhappiness" (cited in Falk, 1994, 104). Beyond these fundamental differences between Freud's and Rousseau's beliefs on the state of nature, I argue that both scenarios may simultaneously co-exist and that it is the external environment which invoke certain dispositions to be more present than others.

I shall thus locate unconscious desire as a state of 'natural' need preceding and latent of recreating an artificial need, what Rousseau and Falk defines as desire, and what I will define as reproduced desire. In this process, the unconscious desire is resurfaced by the economic system through commodities transforming and duplicating itself as a simulacra of the natural. Psychologically, your desires are subliminally modified to their desires. "If the basis for and 'causes' of economic values lies in the intensity of desiring, it follows that the production of these values does not concern primarily the satisfaction of needs nor even the gratification of desires - it implies a production of the desire itself. Otherwise there would not be any production of 'value' " (Falk, 1994, p. 107). The aim of this reproductive process is to ensure the continuous production of economic value ultimately to maintain the asymmetric distribution of power.

Politics of Profiling

Profiling personal information nowadays is interchangeable with consumer profiling, the course of commodification fulfills and guarantees economic and political control. In our networked age, social network services are engineered as profiling machines in which William Bogard describes as "understood best not just as a technology of surveillance, but as a kind of surveillance in advance of surveillance, a technology of 'observation before the fact.' " (Bogard, quoted in Elmer, 2004, p. 73) Furthermore, they stress the power of visualizing the past, present and possible future relationships, a strategy of preemptive diagnosis. In contemplating Freud's notion of 'unconscious mind', I can't help but think that perhaps this was his construction to account for the volatile 'natural' needs and motivations in which he was so determined to rationalise. Correspondingly, according to Greg Elmer's Profile Machines, Mapping the Personal Informational Economy, a relatively simple logic of accounting for the unknown is behind the intention to construct a picture out of the seemingly infinite qualities of life of everyday life. (Elmer, 2004, p. 134) The desire to construct of both the unconscious and online profiles seem to stem from a common source of fear of the mysterious unidentified entity. *(on second thoughts, this method to construct has been since the dawn of man. Perhaps even arguably the very essence of man - our attempt to rationalise and understand: after all religion, science, magic, philosophy..etc are built frameworks to question, fear, revere and/or test out the unknown forces living within and amongst us. Civilization is in fact the greatest construction of them all - overarching and encompassing it beneath its royal palace)* As mentioned,

Elmer's insight of profiling as our way to sufficiently monitor and collect behavior, thought, language and action for the reason of regulation and control rings closely to Bernays' original use of Freud's ideas to manipulate crowd behavior to be fed and tamed by a reproduced desire. The politics of profiling therefore has the same motivation; by attempting to map thereby revealing the unknown to the executors, the cycle of reproduced desires can (re)commence. This preventative measure rests on the capture of our natural needs which are then repackaged artificially and 'sold' back to us.

Active data divulgence. psychology of reward mechanism.

The economy of personal information is contingent on data solicitation as a particular form of exchange characterized by a divulgence of personal information in return for varying degrees of pleasure or the possibility or promise of reward (Elmer, 2004, p. 77). Since the topic of *passive* and *active* data divulgence is in itself another issue I don't wish to go into it, I want to acknowledge the technological breakthroughs in computer technologies that have helped automatise the collection of personal data during *passive* activities such as browsing, clicking etc., and rather concentrate on the active exchange characterized by the performance of data solicitation. To account for unknown datascares, the data solicitation performance is rigged with reward mechanism traps. It is during this moment that the reproduced desire is created and prototyped 'real-time', an automated technical process of integrating or cross-referencing information about services and commodities with consumer or sale data. The more you feed it (think of Facebook's Farmville as a perfect analogy), the better it gets at corrupting, fine-tuning and embellishing your desires. While this happens, not only does the process of familiarization of data solicitation start to work, but it also serves to strengthen its enticement tactics. The function of the mechanism of reward is to perpetuate this cycle by creating a positive sense of gain.

The phenomenon of web 2.0 and digital share is one of those mythical utopian ideals that have been over-hyped and exploited by social media platforms to entice the embracement of the possibilities of the new era. (need more reference) Think of Facebook's slogan "Facebook helps you connect and share with the people in your life." In similar fashion to the invention of public relations, the altruistic notion of sharing and decentralized aspects of free culture movement has been strategically capitalized - 'to share' has become an euphemism for consumption in the networked age. Staying faithful to the likes of propaganda, all sorts of tricks of the trade have been employed to harness and re-appropriate desire. The next section will be an in depth (psycho)analysis of social networks on these techniques.

Case study : 23andme.com "genetics just got personal"

- Recalling the first chapter, the desire to transcend into immortality is something that has captivated humanity for centuries. From antiquity, Chinese Emperors have paradoxically died by swallowing toxic substances in the pursuit of discovering the sought after magic elixir of eternal life. Ever since, this desire has only exacerbated thanks to plethora of technological fantasies partially aroused by science fiction and popular culture. Notwithstanding, technological advances in science also makes this promise more attainable and 23andme.com is one such platform. It is a privately held personal genomics and biotechnology company, that claims to be developing new methods and technologies that will enable consumers to understand their own genetic information. The website is currently split into four categories or 'selling points':

- * Health and Traits, - catering for the expectations of those waiting for the coming singularity. (praying on hypochondriacs?) helps to optimize lifestyles

- * Ancestry, - identity building through tracing back ancestral lineage

- * Sharing and Community, - rewarded by connection to unknown family members, also identity/nation building.

- * Research. - promise of technological progress

issues at stake, possible futures constructed?

- privacy and genetic databases: consequence of genetic discrimination in health insurance for example? (think of movie Gattaca)

- deCODE and its attempt at creating the Icelandic health sector database (HSD)

from wiki: (HSD) containing the medical records and genealogical and genetic data of all Icelanders, has been very controversial, and prompted national and international criticism for its approach to the concepts of privacy and consent. A legal judgement from the Icelandic Supreme Court in November 2003 effectively killed off the HSD project. However, the company believes it can continue to identify disease-related genes without such a database

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